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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/622,220	07/18/2003	Matthew L. Nilles	3128-6046US	5964

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EXAMINER	
NAVARRO, ALBERT MARK	

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
1645	

DATE MAILED: 09/27/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/622,220	NILLES ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Mark Navarro	1645	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *02 August 2006*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-48* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) *7,14,24-37,41-45,47 and 48* is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-6,8-13,15-22,38-40 and 46* is/are rejected.

7)☒ Claim(s) *23* is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date *7/18/03*.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Applicant's election without traverse of Group I, claims 1-6, 8-13, 15-23, 38-40 and 46 in the reply filed on August 2, 2006 is acknowledged.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. Claims 1-6, 8-13, 15, 17-20, 22, 38-40 and 46 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. This is a written description rejection.

Claims 1-6, 8-13, 15, 17-20, 22, 38-40 and 46 are directed to "a means for providing protection to an animal against a pathogen of Yersinia" and wherein the means for providing protection is a YscF protein, as well as "protective epitopes."

Applicants specification (Page 9, paragraph 34) defines "YscF" as a protein that includes amino acid residues in addition to or ***different*** than wild-type YscF.

The specification and claims do not indicate what distinguishing attributes are shared by the members of the genus. Thus, the scope of the claims includes numerous structural variants, and the genus is highly variant because a significant number of structural differences between genus members is permitted. Since the disclosure fails to describe the common attributes or characteristics that identify members of the genus, and because the genus is highly variant, "means for providing protection against Yersinia or a YscF protein or protective epitopes" alone are insufficient to describe the

genus. One of skill in the art would reasonably conclude that the disclosure fails to provide a representative number of species to describe the genus. Thus, applicant was not in possession of the claimed genus.

Adequate written description requires more than a mere statement that it is part of the invention and a reference to a potential method of isolating it. The protein itself is required. See *Fiers v. Revel*, 25 USPQ 2d 1601 at 1606 (CAFC 1993) and *Amgen Inc. V. Chugai Pharmaceutical Co. Lts.*, 18 USPQ2d 1016.

Vas-Cath Inc. V. Mahurkar, 19 USPQ2d 111, clearly states that "applicant must convey with reasonable clarity to those skilled in the art that, as of the filing date sought, he or she was in possession of the invention. The invention is, for purposes of the 'written description' inquiry, whatever is now claimed." The specification does not "clearly allow persons of ordinary skill in the art to recognize that [he or she] invented what is claimed."

Applicant is reminded that Vas-Cath make clear that the written description provision of 35 USC 112 is severable from its enablement provision.

Furthermore, in *The Regents of the University of California v. Eli Lilly* (43 USPQ2d 1398-1412), the court held that a generic statement which defines a genus by only their functional activity does not provide an adequate written description of the genus. The court indicated that while Applicants are not required to disclose every species encompassed by a genus, the description of a genus is achieved by the recitation of a representative number of DNA molecules, usually defined by a nucleotide sequence, falling within the scope of the claimed genus. At section B(1), the court

states that "An adequate written description of a DNA... requires a precise definition, such as by structure, formula, chemical name, or physical properties, not a mere wish or plan for obtaining the claimed chemical invention."

Applicants are directed to the Revised Interim Guidelines for the Examination of Patent Applications Under the 35 U.S.C. 112, 1 "Written Description" Requirement, Federal Register, Vol. 64, No. 244, pages 71427-71440, Tuesday December 21, 1999.

2. Claims 1-6, 8-13, 15-21, and 38-40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, because the specification, while being enabling for immunogenic compositions, does not reasonably provide enablement for compositions capable of providing protection against a pathogen of Yersinia. The specification does not enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the invention commensurate in scope with these claims.

Facts that should be considered in determining whether a specification is enabling, or if it would require an undue amount of experimentation to practice the invention include: (1) the quantity of experimentation necessary to practice the invention, (2) the amount of direction or guidance presented, (3) the presence or absence of working examples, (4) the nature of the invention, (5) the state of the prior art, (6) the relative skill of those in the art, (7) the predictability or unpredictability of the art, and (8) the breadth of the claims. See In re Wands, 858 F.2d 731,737, 8 USPQ2d 1400, 1403 (Fed. Cir. 1988). The Federal Circuit has noted, however, that only those factors that are relevant based on the facts need to be addressed. See Enzo Biochem.

Inc. v. Calgene, Inc. 188 F.3d 1362, 1371, 52 USPQ2d 1129, 1135 (Fed. Cir 1999).

First, as set forth by Plotkin et al (VACCINES W.B. Saunders Company, 1988, page 571) "The key to the problem (of vaccine development) is the identification of that protein component of a virus or microbial pathogen that itself can elicit the production of protective antibodies... and thus protect the host against attack by the pathogen." This teaching directly addresses factors 1, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8.

Second, Hill et al (IDS Ref Number 1) teach of immunizing mice with recombinant YscJ, VirG, YscO, YscP, YscF, or TyeA protein, with Alhydrogel or Ribi as an adjuvant, however ***none*** of these test proteins protected mice against plague. (Emphasis added).

Protection "must by definition trigger an immunoprotective response in the host vaccinated; mere antigenic response is not enough." In re Wright, 999 F.2d 1557,1561, 27 USPQ2d 1510, 1513 (Fed. Cir. 1993).

Given the lack of guidance, lack of working examples, and the unpredictable nature of the invention, one of skill in the art would be forced into excessive experimentation in order to practice the instantly claimed invention.

3. Claim 40 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The claim is vague and indefinite in the recitation of "having homology to SEQ ID NO: 1." One of skill in the art would be unable to determine the metes and bounds of

the claimed invention. For instance what level of homology must be displayed? Likewise at what point is the homology sufficiently different to no longer be encompassed by the term "having homology?" Without a clear definition as to the metes and bounds of the term "having homology" one of skill in the art would be unable to determine the scope of the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

> A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –
>
> (b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1-3, 5-6, 8-11, 13, 15, 17-18, 20, 22, 38-40 and 46 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Titball et al.

The claims are directed to an immunogenic composition comprising a means for providing protection to an animal against a pathogen of Yersinia origin; and a pharmaceutically suitable excipient, and wherein the means for providing protection is a YscF protein.

Titball et al (US Patent Number 5,985,285) disclose of immunogenic compositions comprising Yersinia pestis V antigen and Yersinia pestis F1 antigen. (See claims).

Applicants are again reminded that the specification (Page 9, paragraph 34) defines "YscF" as a protein that includes amino acid residues in addition to or ***different*** than wild-type YscF. (Emphasis added).

Accordingly, since the claims do not recite a required structure for the YscF protein, and furthermore, the specification expressly allows for unlimited sequence differences with the wild type YscF protein, the disclosure of Titball et al is deemed to anticipate the instantly filed claims.

5. Claims 1, 8, and 22, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Stewart Jr., et al.

The claims are directed to a His-tagged YscF protein.

Stewart Jr., et al (US Patent Number 6,261,561) disclose of plasmid pHis-Inv1, encoding a His-tagged Yersinia Pseudotuberculosis Invasin. (See Column 11).

Applicants are again reminded that the specification (Page 9, paragraph 34) defines "YscF" as a protein that includes amino acid residues in addition to or ***different*** than wild-type YscF. (Emphasis added).

Accordingly, since the claims do not recite a required structure for the YscF protein, and furthermore, the specification expressly allows for unlimited sequence differences with the wild type YscF protein, the disclosure of Stewart Jr., et al is deemed to anticipate the instantly filed claims.

Claim 23 is objected to for depending upon a rejected base claim, however claim 23 is free of the prior art of record.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mark Navarro whose telephone number is (571) 272-0861.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lynette Smith can be reached on (571) 272-0864. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Mark Navarro
Primary Examiner
September 21, 2006